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ABSTRACT

The 25 state program specialists in the state vocational education agencies were individually interviewed to assess their views on staff development. Themes that emerged from the composite interview information in the three areas of postsecondary education (part- and full-time programs), secondary education, and student support were very similar and yet there were differences in emphasis. Primary ideas about staff development that the specialists voiced as a group concerned flexible and diverse structures and delivery approaches, support for personal/professional development, the importance of planning and needs assessment, networking with other groups, high quality human resources and increased and equitable monetary resources, and guidance in curriculum development and revision and related information on specific content and teaching methods. Three themes or issues related to comprehensive staff development covering all of vocational education also emerged: the importance of establishing goals for the direction of vocational education and for the staff development needed to reach these goals, the need for better communication and a greater group effort among all specialists related to staff development and staff development needs, and the need to look at licensure and relicensure as they relate to staff development. (YLB)

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VOCATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT AS VIEWED BY STATE PROGRAM SPECIALISTS

INSTRUCTIONAL AND STUDENT
SUPPORT SECTION
MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OF
VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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APRIL 1985

STAFF DEVELOPMENT
AS VIEWED BY
STATE PROGRAM SPECIALISTS

A Summary

Background

The 25 secondary and post-secondary state program specialists were individually interviewed in March and April, 1985. Their views on staff development - what to consider, how it should look, and what it should do - were summarized and examined for the common and particular elements which were found within them. Following are the primary ideas about staff development that the specialists voiced as a group:

Major Points

1. A staff development program which addresses the many needs within the secondary and post-secondary vocational systems must include flexible and diverse structures and delivery approaches.

   - Staff development needs, conditions, and resources are very different across programs, geographic areas, and individuals.
   - Presently, the teacher education institutions constitute almost the sole source of state (federal) funded staff development for the system. They offer many good elements, but there is still much to improve.
   - Many creative, flexible (and often low-cost) approaches are available for offering staff development.
   - No one approach can or should be expected to meet all staff development needs.

2. Elements of good planning - needs assessment, goal-setting, evaluation - involving local and state staff and other relevant groups, such as the private sector, are important components of good staff development.

   - An ongoing needs assessment and planning process needs to be developed.
   - Local recipients of staff development services must have strong input into the process.
   - Setting system staff development goals and priorities is necessary to guide programs and activities.
   - Evaluation is an important element of quality staff development.

3. Networking with business and industry and other sources of expertise in the private sector can enhance opportunities for needed staff development.

- Many opportunities and approaches for involving the private sector in staff development are possible.
- Private sector involvement should take place in planning and offering staff development activities.
- Staff development offered through business and industry tends to meet better the individualized needs of instructors.
- Industry seminars and the IICACR model should be explored for more widespread use.

4. Guidance in curriculum development and revision and information on related content and teaching methods/teacher roles are all important aspects of good staff development.

- Good staff development should include a variety of activities related to curriculum development and revision.
- Most program areas have particular needs related to certain content and teaching approaches; some see staff development as means to move in new, more appropriate curricular directions (learner outcomes, higher order thinking skills, repackaging continuous programs into part-time).
- Need also exists for assistance in developing improved teaching skills.

5. Better communications and an improved group effort among all specialists related to staff development and staff development needs are necessary.

- New ideas and information common across program areas should be offered to all specialists together.
- The relationship of specialists to the staff development unit should be clarified and improved.
- Joint staff development efforts involving secondary and post-secondary staff will be appropriate in some areas and not in others.

6. Licensure and relicensure need to be examined as they relate to staff development.

- Licensure/relicensure must not drive staff development, but
- Staff development must consider licensure requirements in its planning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Introduction..... 1

I. POST-SECONDARY SPECIALISTS..... 1

Flexible structures and approaches..... 1
Needs assessment, planning, and evaluation..... 6
Networking with the private sector..... 7
Staff development resources..... 8
Curriculum and instruction..... 9

II. SECONDARY SPECIALISTS..... 12

Flexible structures and approaches..... 12
Needs assessment and planning..... 15
Human and monetary resources..... 15
Curriculum and instruction..... 16

III. STUDENT SUPPORT AREAS..... 19

Flexible structures and approaches..... 19
Personal and professional staff development..... 21
Joint planning of staff development..... 22
Quality instructors for staff development..... 22
Specific areas of need..... 23

IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 25

Programmatic staff development themes
Flexible and diverse structures/approaches..... 25
Support for personal/professional development..... 26
Importance of planning and needs assessment..... 26
Networking with other groups..... 27

Comprehensive staff development themes
Goals as directions for activities..... 28
Communication and cooperation among specialists... 28
Licensure/relicensure and staff development..... 29

Recommendations..... 29

STAFF DEVELOPMENT: A VIEW FROM STATE PROGRAM SPECIALISTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The twenty-five state program specialists in the state vocational education agencies were individually interviewed in March and April, 1985. Their views on staff development--what to consider, how it should look, and what it should do - were assessed through semi-structured interviews which lasted 45-60 minutes. Comments and suggestions from these interviews were summarized, examined, and integrated into themes which emerged from the composite interview information. These themes provided a framework for the design of effective and beneficial staff development programs. The themes and the program specialists' comments and concerns related to them are reported in the three sections which follow: post-secondary education (part- and full-time programs), secondary education and student support areas. Following these three reports, the themes and their specific content are summarized, compared, and contrasted; several more general themes or issues emerging from this study are suggested and recommendations for the structure and content of staff development programs based on the interview information made.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION (Part- and Full-Time Programs)

1. A good staff development plan needs to include a variety of flexible structures and approaches for delivering staff development.

   The need for diversity and flexibility in structures and approaches for delivering staff development in order to meet the wide variety of staff development needs was stressed by program specialists responsible for post-secondary part and full-time programs. Their suggestions provide guidelines for designing this diversity and flexibility in staff development programming. Before outlining their ideas, it is useful to note special considerations and constraints to delivering good staff development identified by the specialists. An examination of the following list provides justifiable reason for giving attention to providing flexibility and diversity in what is offered. The special considerations and constraints cited by the post-secondary education program specialists included:

   a. The need for release time for full-time instructional staff to attend staff development activities with the related problems of:

      (1) Money to pay substitutes.

(2) Money for travel expenses, fees, meals, and lodging.

(3) Availability of substitutes when several teachers in the same content area need to attend the same training sessions.

(4) Support from AVTI administration for instructor release time for staff development

b. Time factors related to:

(1) Specialist time available.

(2) Local staff time available.

(3) Time staff development is offered that does not conflict with local time priorities.

c. The need to have qualified/current/state-of-art people providing staff development.

d. Location including:

1. Geographic distances to training, especially in sparsely populated areas.

2. Adequate physical space.

e. Limited number of instructors needing training in some specific content areas that have little relation to other content areas.

f. Diversity within program areas and related advantages and disadvantages of homogeneous versus heterogeneous grouping for staff development activities.

A variety of suggestions was offered for delivering staff development which address many of these special considerations and constraints and indicate the diversity that is possible in what is offered.

a. Using cable television and videotapes for staff development.

b. Offering staff development at AVTIs which have a well-developed program in the content area being offered.

c. Providing individual on-site staff development as a follow-up to group staff development on topics such as curriculum development and the use of software in student instruction. One specialist indicated that, although a portion of staff development comes from workshop and course offerings, much is also offered on a one-to-one basis which is motivating to the individual instructors.

d. Using interactive teaching methods in which group dynamics are considered. One specialist emphasized the need for group versus individual industry training and indicated that greater benefit is derived from training several individuals together in new concepts.

e. Offering opportunities for small group meetings among instructors of similar programs designed to foster exchange of ideas, information, resources, instructional materials, curriculum innovations, etc.

f. Developing resource centers at AVTIs or other appropriate locations in a variety of technological fields, e.g. microelectronics and computer applications. Different facilities could specialize and bring in instructors from other locations for training who would return to teach in their home schools.

g. Offering staff development to instructors at two levels: technically upgrading top instructors as is done in graduate school and upgrading instructors who are not "up to par" in teaching basics.

A particularly effective delivery method presently in practice in some program areas is the regional delivery of staff development, done by dividing the state into regions and identifying coordinators for each region who plan and offer much of the staff development in the program area. Such a system allows for quick delivery following needs identification and shorter driving distances for instructors. Cooperation among the state specialists, regional coordinators, and personnel at a teacher training institution is key to the success of such a delivery method for staff development.

Two specialists indicated a need to offer special staff development approaches to new instructors. One suggested having a plan for new instructors which included internships with experienced instructors in different schools: e.g., another suggested having teacher educators from a nearby university serve as mentors to a new instructor for at least their first year of instruction. Further mentoring might be a mutual decision between mentor and new instructor. The need to provide in-service to part-time instructors was also emphasized, as well as the need for state leadership in staff development for marketing instructors.

In several program areas in post-secondary part- and full-time programs, contracts with teacher training institutions have been the major source of staff development services. Specialists indicated successes with staff development offered through these arrangements as well as advanced extensive suggestions for change. Planning has usually been done primarily through direct contact between program

specialists and teacher training institution staff. Meetings have been held either by specialists going to the teacher training institutions or representatives from the institutions coming to meet with specialists. One specialist suggested that representatives from teaching training institutions might instead directly ask vocational instructors what is needed through joint planning and,therefore, help instructors feel less intimidated by college orientations. This person indicated that instructors now feel totally disconnected from academic institutions for their continuing education.

Additional course development with teacher training institutions is done through regional coordinators and through advisory committees working with the specialists and University of Minnesota staff.

The following successes with staff development provided by teacher training institutions were indicated:

a. Presenter/teacher knew and presented area well.

b. AVTI administrators perceived workshops as a growing experience for their staff.

c. Workshops were developed and provided quickly to meet needs.

d. Good cooperation has occurred between specialists and various units at the University of Minnesota, e.g. the Department of Vocational and Technical Education and the Institute of Technology.

e. Advisory committees for planning staff development offered by the University of Minnesota which included business and industry representatives have been useful.

A variety of problems with the staff development offered through teacher training institutions was indicated by specialists, along with a number of suggestions for change to make teacher training institutions more responsive to their needs. Problems included:

a. Many instructors do not take courses because of the credits and tuition costs involved. Teachers at the top of pay schedules, for example, need no more credits and do not want to pay for them. Credit courses may be appropriate for new secondary teachers who want credits for lane changes, but many post-secondary teachers no longer need credits. Many instructors prefer workshop, non-credit types of staff development activities which are not set up like a regular university course.

b. Several specialists indicated that teachers and courses offered are not up-to-date, especially in technological areas. It was suggested that vocational educators at teacher training institutions need to change their view or philosophy of technical education--what it is, how it should be addressed, and how it relates to the professional fields.

c. Teacher training institutions are not meeting individual needs of instructors (although they may be meeting system needs). These institutions tend to offer generic professional teacher educator training which is not particulary relevant to actual staff development needs. More is needed in technical areas.

d. One specialist indicated that follow-up from instructors at the University of Minnesota was poor. For example, assignments were not given in writing and course evaluations of what people learned were not provided when requested.

e. A difference in the viewing the mission of the University of Minnesota created difficulties for one specialist when attempting to arrange staff development offerings.

Suggestions for change included:

a. Offering follow-up staff development programs to workshops for new instructors as well as workshops for experienced program staff.

b. Improving selection of outside resource people brought into courses.

c. Expanding delivery methods.

d. Promoting the use of student organizations in various vocational program areas using the FFA model.

Some of the post-secondary program specialists indicated that it is important for the teacher training institutions to offer professional updating in teaching methods, but it is not their function to provide technical updating. It was suggested that technical updating should be done instead through industry. One specialist indicated that teacher training institutions are viewed as more theoretical in what they offer and instructors prefer courses offering opportunities for immediate application. Another specialist indicated that instructors already have a lot of basic teaching skills and instead need what was termed "teacher enhancement". It was suggested that teacher training institutions might be best viewed as resources and as sources of research in areas that would be helpful to instructors, e.g., delivery systems, teaching methods and

studying where students go. As a part of the latter suggestions, the specialist indicated the need to seek input from specialists in developing research agendas so the research benefits people in the field.

Two specialists had little experience working with teacher training institutions and indicated a desire to work with them. One specialist indicated a desire to work with private teacher training institutions as well, and one suggested regional staff development offered through combined efforts between state colleges and universities, industries, and AVTIs in each region of the state.

Some opposition was addressed to the fact that teacher training institutions receive a major portion of the available staff development funds. Two specialists indicated a desire to have more control over staff development dollars encouraging instructors in their program areas to be more responsive to them. It was emphasized that such a shift in the control of staff development funds would not preclude the use of teacher training institutions for certain kinds of staff development. However, it would not force people who do not need them to take credit courses and it would provide more flexibility in opportunities for staff development, including more use of industry.

It is clear from these perspectives of post-secondary education specialists that variety in structures and approaches to delivering staff development is necessary and possible given various needs and constraints, as well as the diverse means used and suggested for delivery. What can be done individually by specialists themselves, teacher training institutions, industry, the August Conference, etc., is not enough; however, these sources for training and education and others that might be identified, jointly can deliver good staff development. One specialist indicated that whatever structures and approaches are used for offering staff development, it is important that they are well planned and well done. Another specialist pointed out the need to build a reputation for offering good staff development by assuring that what is planned is of high quality.

2. <u>Needs assessment, planning, and evaluation involving local and state staff and other relevant groups are important components of good staff development</u>.

Bringing together local and state staff and people from business and industry for joint needs assessment and planning was mentioned in some way or another as an important part of good staff development by almost all of the post-secondary program specialists. Having an ongoing process directly involving instructors in their own professional development and in staff development program planning was considered to be a key to successful staff development. Joint planning and cooperation between local

and state staff and representatives from outside groups such as teacher training institutes and business and industry, was also thought to be important for effective resource development and use.

A suggestion for needs assessment and planning for staff development offered by one specialist included having occupational group representatives from the best in the private sector meet with a group of the best instructors from the vocational system to develop a performance profile of a good teacher. Such a performance profile would include what teachers need to know and be able to do both professionally and technically and would form a basis for staff assessment and staff development planning.

As well as indicating the importance of joint needs assessment, several specialists indicated the need to evaluate staff development programs periodically. One specialist also indicated the need to assess the licensing renewal process done by local committees. Another suggested revision in licensure/relicensure requirements allowing specialists/experts in particular program areas to instruct across programs where their specialty applied. A desire to see relicensure of vocational education teachers become more specific and do more to require teachers to improve themselves was expressed.

3. Networking with business and industry and other sources of expertise in the private sector can enhance opportunities for needed staff development.

The themes addressing the need for variety in structures and approaches to delivering staff development and for needs assessment both clearly included emphasis on the need to include business and industry in developing an effective staff development effort. Others suggested the use of business and industry representatives, along with other groups, in needs assessment and planning. Several specialists also indicated that staff development offered through business and industry tended to meet better the individualized needs of instructors as compared to teacher training institution courses. Training offered on-site in industry, as well as industry people coming to AVTIs to do staff development, were suggested. On-site training ideas included the need to offer opportunities for instructors to return to industry for a period of time as a way of renewing both themselves and their programs. Both individual and group approaches for offering updating through business and industry were suggested. The importance of technical updating through industry experiences was stressed. In addition, two specialists suggested organizing the delivery of staff development throughout the state through trade and professional associations and organizations, such as the Minnesota Trade and Industrial Association (which has done so in the past) and professional health organizations.

An exemplary model of staff development offered through industry was suggested by one specialist who described the approach as technologically current, cost effective, and acceptable at both industrial and vocational levels. The model included targeting a portion of AVTI course fees toward a national consortium which supported sending instructors periodically from each state to three-day training and updating sessions. These instructors needed to agree to update other instructors after their return, as well as to teach courses to industry people through evening programs.

Two specialists indicated it was easy to get industries and instructors to work together in their particular program areas because industry demanded a certain level of competence or students would not be hired. Other comments related to this theme included recognition of differences in dealing with industry in the health field in contrast to the automotive field, for example, and a suggestion that instructors be required to participate in industry events like trade shows and conferences at least once a year.

4. Resources for staff development need to be recognized, expanded, and distributed in an equitable manner.

In the theme related to the need to include a variety of structures and approaches for delivering staff development, additional funding was indicated as necessary to address several of the special considerations and constraints in delivery, as well as to provide some of the recommended approaches for increasing diversity in delivery. One post-secondary education program specialist indicated that funding for staff development was not allotted to program areas on the basis of the necessity for technical updating in that area. It was pointed out that those areas undergoing most change were receiving the least staff development money.

Two specific suggestions were made for distributing staff development funds in a more equitable manner. One suggestion was to set aside enough money for each program area to provide at least two major in-service programs per year. Tunneling money for in-service through specialists in this manner would allow for flexibility and the ability to direct funds toward teacher training institutions development, industries, consultants - whatever was most appropriate for a particular situation. A second suggestion envisioned distributing the total amount of staff development money currently being given to teacher training institutions among program specialists based on the percentage of teachers, counselors, or administrators they serve in their areas. Specialists would then prioritize staff development needs through a staff development committee. RFPs would be written for non-credit type

workshops and contracts would be awarded based on the priorities indicated by the committees. In this manner, specialists would assure that instructors got what they needed.

Another resource area discussed was that of people in the AVTI system. Several specialists indicated that experienced, skilled instructors needed to be recognized and used in providing staff development. One specialist suggested that a resource catalog be developed listing instructors/trainers (who they are and what they can teach) in order that specialists who might be providing staff development on similar topics could make use of good resource people.

5. Guidance in curriculum development and revision and information on related content and teaching methods/teacher role are all important aspects of good staff development.

Several post-secondary program specialists stressed the need for staff development activities related to curriculum development and revision at the local level. It was indicated that guidance was needed in curriculum development for both total programs and specific courses and should include help with resource materials development and evaluation. One specialist indicated the need for staff development to help instructors repackage full-time programs to meet the needs of part-time students. It was mentioned that instructors in some of the post-secondary education program areas need specific help in developing curriculum materials because they do not have background in this skill and are uncomfortable with doing it. Another specialist stressed the importance of this type of staff development while pointing out that many vocational educators are from business and industry and do not have training in the methods and techniques needed to make good teachers. A suggestion for dealing with instructors' discomfort in this area was to offer staff development in curriculum development and revision without directly labeling it as such.

It was suggested that instructors be allotted time and funds to work on curriculum development and revision, including follow-up and individual on-site staff development following in-service on curriculum development and revision. One specialist recommended that, because certain programs are moving toward competency-based education at the state level, instructors need background on this approach as it compares to other types of education, as well as information on its implications for teaching materials, teacher-student relationships, etc.

A variety of topics or content areas for staff development was suggested which would support better teaching of program and course curriculum. Some content suggestions were subject oriented and others were skill oriented. Some

specialists merely indicated a general need for instructor updating in both technical content and skills in specific areas within their program areas. One specialist emphasized that technical updating for their particular area was related to new ideas and processes, not to products or hardware.

Some content suggestions were very program specific such as those dealing with: technical upgrading in livestock,

- technical upgrading in livestock, marketing, animal science breeding and nutrition), crop science, horticulture (landscape and design)
- farm financial management
- legal awareness
- documentation of the employment need or potential for developing a new program
- development of a new program with input from business and and industry
- definition of both technical and work attitude/ethic skills for which students are preparing.
- identification and teaching in the use of software and in the use of microcomputers for data processing operators and programming instructors.

Other topic suggestions were more general and would be likely to apply across more than one program area:

- information on marketing programs;
- approaches for providing service to special populations such as the elderly, handicapped, unemployed, and displaced;
- effectives uses of advisory committees.

One specialist suggested the need to educate instructors in the philosophy and use of a core curriculum (first year curriculum standardized for many programs) in the basic sciences upon which they could build.

While several specialists suggested topics for staff development content and deemphasized the need for staff development on teaching skills, others indicated the need to update instructors on teaching strategies. For example, one specialist suggested the need for ideas for instructors on how to quickly improve classroom or group presentations and include the use of materials, such as overheads, etc. Also suggested was that instructors need ideas for new delivery systems to meet the needs of students as well as in-service

in the use of these new systems/strategies for delivering education. Related to this focus, it was proposed that instructors need some kind of staff development related to their changing roles - from traditional classroom teachers to resource/classroom managers, problem solvers, and educators of adults.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

1. A good staff development plan needs to include a variety of flexible structures and approaches for delivering staff development.

As with the post-secondary program specialists, the secondary program specialists reported several special considerations and constraints to offering staff development which supported the need for diversity and flexibility in the structures and approaches used for delivering it. These considerations included problems with accessibility to staff development activities in certain regions of the state, time programs were offered and amount teacher time available, availability of personnel to do staff development, low priority given staff development by some instructors, and need for money for travel and teacher time. It was suggested that the procedures by which staff development are offered, including procedures by which money can be spent, need to be expanded to permit more freedom and flexibility. For instance, relicensure requirements and the human relations requirements were cited as examples of requirements which do more to direct the kinds of in-service made available than anything else. In relation to relicensure, one specialist pointed out that local committees are allowing "shoddy stuff" to apply as credits for relicensure. One specialist indicated a special consideration that may be unique to his particular program area, i.e., a mature staff with lifetime licenses who are at the top of the pay scale and feel no need for updating courses and other staff development offerings.

A variety of suggestions for increasing the array of flexible structures and approaches for delivering staff development was made by these specialists. Included were:

a. Offering opportunities for both homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings of participants by content area in staff development activities, for example:

   (1) Bring together people in vocational education and special education for joint staff development to help these two areas of education better understand each other.

   (2) Avoid lumping people together for a course such as "Philosophy of Vocational Education" where examples discussed related to agriculture or training and development may be irrelevant to home economics educators.

(3) Offer joint staff development across secondary content areas on such topics as higher level thinking skills, learner outcomes, and how to begin to access all areas.

b. Offering both a fall in-service for instructors such as a two-day credit workshop and workshops during the school year.

c. Providing staff development for those seeking advanced degrees as well as credit workshops and courses for those seeking license renewal.

d. Providing good in-service for new instructors.

e. Allowing for peer teaching and training in which a group of key teachers could be trained and return to their geographic area to do further training.

f. Sharing of resources among teachers.

g. Offering staff development both in groups and through other more directive means with fewer people over a long period of time.

h. Offering staff development through specialists and teacher training institutions if what is needed is generic and not technically specific, and through industry if what is needed is related to new, highly specialized technology. One specialist indicated presently offering staff development through all of the following sources: specialist-sponsored workshops, workshops and licensure/relicensure courses offered through several teacher training institutions, workshops provided by industry, workshops sponsored by a professional organization including those offered at the August Conference, and workshops made available through a special grant.

i. Exploring the area of telecommunications as a means of delivering staff development.

j. Offering "hands on" staff development activities in small groups where teachers can learn by doing since this is how they teach.

k. Using a specially refurbished and equipped truck that can be moved from school to school for training teachers as well as teaching students in new technological areas.

As with the post-secondary program specialists, several of these specialists suggested some type of regional plan for offering staff development. However, one specialist indicated ease in working with staff development on a state-

wide basis rather than a regionalized structure because needs in the program area are similar across the state. One specialist suggested organizing the state into regions and, through the use of a series of one credit courses, peer teaching, and building networks, implement a staff development plan over a period of time. It was pointed out that, for such a process to work, it would be necessary to start in small ways with certain targeted areas of the state and a few key teachers "who want to make something happen."

The teacher training institutions were recognized as one source of staff development for instructors in secondary vocational education. Arrangements for staff development offered by these institutions are commonly made through joint meetings between program specialists and teacher training institution representatives once a year or more frequently. Some arrangements are made through area coordinators. Several specialists indicated much success and satisfaction in their experiences with the staff development offered through teacher training institutions. Responsiveness to needs and requests, good cooperation and communication, offering workshops in requested geographic areas, offering one credit courses, good personnel who keep abreast of trends and function as leaders and role models for local instructors, use of regular faculty for teaching, and working successfully within constraints were all cited as positive aspects of staff development experiences with teacher training institutions.

The secondary program specialists also cited several problems and lack of success in working with teacher training institutions in offering staff development and offered suggestions for change. Problems included:

a. Dissatisfaction with the course "Philosophy of Vocational Education".

b. High cost of college credits.

c. Relicensure requirements directing and constraining the kinds of in-service made available.

d. Time and location offered - need to find ways to deliver in rural areas where geographic distances are a problem.

e. Instructors teaching courses not curent or graduate students versus regular faculty.

f. Courses made available and people not taking them.

g. Considerable delay between requests made and course implementation at times - and some requests not implemented at all.

h. More traditional workshops and courses offered; courses viewed as too futuristic or controversial avoided.

Suggestions for change included:

a. Reviewing the mission of a land grant college in offering in-service to teachers.

b. Offering one credit courses.

c. Using quality teacher educators and regular faculty or seeking outside resources, e.g., from industry, when appropriate.

d. Conducting research that is needed as short pieces of applied research.

e. Offering a required undergraduate course on how to organize student organizations as an integral part of secondary instructional programs.

f. Developing leadership for vocational education through involvement of interns from graduate programs at the State Department.

g. Working more closely with teacher training institutions to make sure what is being offered is really what is needed.

h. Offering courses that are less theoretical and more useful for immediate application in the classroom.

i. Offering credit courses in content areas, e.g., farm management, rather than only in education methods.

j. Paying teacher training institutions to develop curriculum in needed areas.

2. Needs assessment and planning involving local and state staff and other relevant groups are important components of good staff development.

Several secondary program specialists emphasized the need to begin planning for staff development through needs assessment involving first listening to the needs of teachers and assessing where they are and what they have had in the past. Based on this process, it was suggested that long-term goals for staff development be formulated and programs be designed. The usefulness of soliciting a mix of input from industry, professional organizations, and students - as well as from instructors and state staff - for determining what staff development is necessary was stressed.

3. Human and monetary resources are important to good staff development, and monetary resources need to be distributed in an equitable manner.

Several comments were made by the secondary specialists regarding the importance of qualified resource people for offering staff development. It was suggested that resource people/trainers need to be experts in their areas who are forward looking and have skills both in teaching and in functioning in a supportive role. The use of peer teaching was suggested by several of these specialists. It was also noted that support for staff development is needed from the educational community and from policy makers.

As well as stressing the importance of human resources for good staff development, considerable discussion occurred on the part of these secondary program specialists about monetary resources and the present funding system for secondary vocational education staff development. Some of these specialists believed post-secondary vocational education either had more money for staff development or found it easier to obtain than did the secondary education areas. They suggested that secondary program specialists be given at least a portion of staff development funds to do their own arranging for staff development, perhaps in consultation with teacher user committees. One specialist pointed out that good staff development should result in making vocational education an essential part of a comprehensive secondary education program and that this can only happen if the secondary vocational education unit is given jurisdiction as to how staff development money is spent. Another specialist suggested making the most of staff development money by giving some to specialists for doing some of their own staff development and for cooperating with other specialists and with teacher training institutions when possible and appropriate.

4. Guidance in curriculum development and revision and information on related content and teaching methods are all important aspects of good staff development.

Extensive attention was given to the need for staff development related to curriculum areas by the secondary education program specialists. These suggestions ranged from the need to help instructors become comfortable with and receptive to new curriculum trends to the desire to involve instructors in the development and revision of their own curriculum. Suggestions for staff development related to curriculum included the need to help instructors:

a. Develop and implement learner outcome based curriculum.

b. Develop curriculum materials and resources, including the identification of community resources for help in teaching courses.

c. Understand better new curriculum in order for the curriculum to be more uniformly taught and integrated into other curriculum being taught.

d. Modify and coordinate curriculum. It was suggested that a few teacher in-service sessions for doing this are not enough in a program area where instructors work on almost an individual one-to-one basis with students in developing competencies.

Two specialists who had previous successful experiences with the procedure suggested making money available for contracting with individual teachers or a small group of teachers to develop curriculum in a priority area, with or without the help of a teacher training institution. The curriculum could then be distributed to other teachers in the content area.

Several secondary specialists stressed the need for staff development in teaching strategies and others expressed needs for staff development in specific content areas. On the other hand, the need for staff development in both content and methods was also mentioned. One specialist stressed that the need to teach teachers how to teach, to develop skills and strategies for teaching students to prepare for the future, and to prioritize or choose what to teach are much higher staff development priorities than content updating. This specialist emphasized that it is difficult, however, to motivate teachers to take courses needed in teaching methods when they prefer content courses.

Suggestions for staff development in teaching methods and other related skills included:

a. Providing instructors with available evaluation tools for different handicapped populations and skills for using these tools.

b. Assisting instructors develop skills for working with the special needs of disadvantaged students.

c. Helping instructors of disadvantaged students realize and improve their function as role models in both written and oral communication.

d. Providing help to teachers who need to work with both disadvantaged and handicapped students in some schools.

e. Providing instructors with skills for dealing with youth stress, e.g., helping farm youth deal with a change in life goals when they are not able take over the family farm because it is gone.

f. Helping teachers recognize and be able to function in the role of trend setters, rather than of followers, by being aware of what is taking place in the marketplace where they will be placing students.

g. Helping teachers of handicapped students keep updated on what is going on in both vocational and special education.

h. Helping home economics teachers teach management skills.

i. Providing workshops on computer technology and locating software applicable to the program area.

j. Providing technical updating and retraining.

k. Providing teachers with ideas for supporting student organizations in their program areas.

l. Helping teachers teach for:

    (1) Concept attainment
    (2) Higher level thinking skills
    (3) Learner outcomes

Related to these suggestions, one specialist pointed out the need to make instructors cognizant of skills they teach in the basics of math, science, and communication and higher order thinking skills which they are not aware of or do not take credit for doing. This specialist suggested that teachers need to get a better handle on what they are doing in these areas, take credit for contributions, and conscientiously do a better job of teaching in these areas.

Needs expressed for staff development in content areas included:

a. Financial management and economic principles.

b. School finance and administration (not the same course administrators take.

c. Information on community-based training programs.

STUDENT SUPPORT AREAS

The five program specialists in the student support areas gave perspectives which led to somewhat different guidelines for developing effective and beneficial staff development programs from those emerging from the interviews with the secondary and post-secondary specialists. These included:

1. A good staff development plan needs to include a variety of flexible structures and approaches for delivering staff development.

   A variety of suggestions was made by program specialists in the student support areas which addresses the need for diverse structures and approaches to delivering staff development. These suggestions included:

   a. A "tiering down" of training in which the specialist trains 5-10 people in the program area who in turn do training at local AVTIs.

   b. Giving specialists teacher education money to do training evenings and weekends for which credit would be optional in order to both tie in with university credits and to reflect what is desired by local people.

   c. Using interaction and "hands on" experience in teaching techniques.

   d. Modifying programs for meeting specific needs on reservations.

   e. Using staff development programs from other states as models in order to avoid "reinventing the wheel".

   f. Offering staff development courses in sequential form in the order they are related to one another.

   As with the other two groups of specialists, several special considerations and constraints were indicated which supported the need for a variety of structures and approaches for delivering staff development. These included:

   a. Geographic distances and the need to offer on-site training, e.g., on reservations.

b. Need for money for travel, substitutes, credit costs, etc.

c. Lack of motivation to attend when credit is not given for what is offered.

d. Difficulty in motivating action and measuring progress in program areas on a short-term basis.

e. Challenges of dealing more with affective than cognitive content.

f. Lack of an established theoretical base for what is offered.

g. Lack of time.

A variety of comments and suggestions was made by these specialists in regard to working with teacher training institutions as one means of offering staff development. Arrangements were made by these specialists through either direct contact or, in the case of one specialist, through regional coordinators at AVTIs. Joint planning, task division, and the use of instructors oriented to the program area (e.g. the use of fire service instructors for teaching vocational education courses to fire service personnel) were successful aspects of this source of staff development as indicated by these specialists. One specialist indicated frustration in arranging for teacher education, reporting that she often became responsible for most of the arrangements.

Although most of the student support specialists commented that instructors resist going to traditional teacher training courses and that these courses do not meet needs, one specialist indicated that instructors in the particular program area do want to earn credit for their staff development activities that could be transferred to teacher training institutions. Specific problems and suggestions for change indicated by these specialists in their work with the teacher training institutions included:

a. Individuals at the teacher training institutions are not trained to offer the services needed. Adjunct faculty would need to be hired to meet the needs.

b. The University of Minnesota has redesigned what is needed to fit into its course and credit structure, and staff needs are not being met.

c. Initial training programs in counseling offer nothing in preparation for AVTI counseling.

d. "Philosophy of Vocational Education" and "Human Relations" should be removed as licensure requirements. They are considered a waste of time by instructors.

e. Some course requirements have been heavy, but needed adjustments are being made.

f. An evaluation of teacher training institution staff development offerings that covers more than if participants liked the sessions would be helpful.

g. Whatever is offered in teacher education should have enough research tied to it to ensure its credibility.

h. "Companion courses" already in place at teacher training institutions, such as introductory-level university courses which can be adapted to the particular needs and objectives of a program area, are needed, e.g. in the fire service area.

It was suggested there is need to move away from the idea that teacher training institutions are the only viable source or delivery system for staff development and the notion that no other staff development is "up to par". As with the post-secondary education group of specialists, a specialist in this group indicated that the University of Minnesota is a good source for research and other resources. However, it was pointed out that teacher training institutions should not have the monopoly on credits. It was suggested that the State Board of Vocational-Technical Education could package their own workshops and offer courses for credit since a major share of a specialist's job is technical training and updating, and they know best what is needed.

2. Provision for personal and professional development of staff needs to be part of a good staff development plan.

Several comments and suggestions were made by these five specialists which centered around this theme - a theme that did not emerge so explicitly with the other two groups of specialists. Several suggestions were made for staff development related to the personal needs and development of the instructors. It was suggested that mature staff in areas where there is little movement need some type of staff development that offers them a "shot in the arm" to keep up interest and deal with stress and "burnout". This was considered to be especially important for those who deal with the problems of others all day. The need was also expressed to help staff deal with their own self worth within the system.

A variety of staff development needs were expressed related to the professional development of staff. These included approaches that provided for:

a. Upward mobility for staff who enter the vocational system as counselors. These programs must deal with the constraints of licensing and lack of training so that staff may change and grow within their jobs or move to administration.

b. Credits for staff development which are transferable to teacher training institutions or are equivalent to those provided by teacher training institutions for degree credit.

c. Staff development for fire service people which advances them to the second level in a four level system. In this program area, the need for developing new instructors was also indicated.

3. Planning staff development with the involvement of local and state staff and other relevant groups is important to good staff development.

Joint planning between local and state staff, consultants, and related professional organizations was stressed as important to effective staff development by specialists in this group. Listening to local people and matching what was offered with what these people wanted was thought to be an especially important part of planning. The importance of long-range planning to effective staff development was also stressed by one specialist who had undertaken such a process in the particular program area with the involvement of staff and had found it to be beneficial.

4. The quality of resource people selected for offering staff development is important to the effectiveness of these activities.

The kind and quality of instructors selected to present staff development offerings were considered to be important by this group of specialists. Their suggestions included using instructors who were "experts" because they had been practicing whatever they would be teaching or had experience with training in the area, (e.g. sex equity), and using resource people who matched the needs of the group and had a style that would be non-threatening to the group. Local staff with expertise in an area in which training was planned were also suggested as resources for staff development. Not having enough qualified instructors to do staff development in some areas of the state is a problem.

5. Staff development in specific areas of need contributes to the effectiveness of vocational education programs and services.

A number of very specific needs for staff development in particular areas related to skill development, curriculum development, and content were expressed by the program specialists in the student support areas. These included the need for:

a. Training instructors to do forecasting to stimulate economic development on reservations.

b. Developing learning packets for Vocational Education as a Second Language (VESL) which is mainly a process of restructuring existing curriculum.

c. Providing staff development for instructors in student assessment, including the ability to develop and use appropriate instruments.

d. Offering additional training for working with changing populations, e.g. students in their 30's and 40's who are both caring for older parents as well as children.

e. Structuring community-based training for instructors working with limited learners.

f. Providing training in the use of new referral systems and in finding appropriate resources.

g. Keeping financial aid people up-to-date on state and federal policies.

h. Developing in-service for student senate advisors on administrative issues which include an understanding of the system as well as training on how to be a better student advisor.

i. Training for job placement people in placement processes.

It was also suggested that staff development was needed on some topics that are a part of these program specialists' areas for all instructors in the vocational education system. These areas included information on developing "people skills", understanding sex equity, developing skills in economic forecasting, placing non-traditional students, offering remedial assistance, and understanding students who must go through both language and skill acquisition. The suggestion that instructors in the entire system need to develop people skills or the ability to deal with people and their unique problems was noted as important in relation to high dropout rates and equity for handicapped and others. The suggestion for system staff development in understanding

the issues involving sex equity included a plan for a staff evaluation system at the local AVTIs which would indicate areas in which staff development was needed. As part of this plan, staff development in areas relating to sex equity might well arise as a need.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The themes identified from the interviews with program specialists in the three areas of post-secondary education, secondary education, and student support are very similar, and yet there are differences in emphasis.

THEME #1: FLEXIBLE AND DIVERSE STRUCTURES/APPROACHES

All three groups made a wide variety of statements which led to the theme common to all: "the need for flexible and diverse structures and approaches to delivering staff development". All three groups of specialists stressed the need to deal with the constraints related to delivering staff development that arose from lack of accessibility to training in all geographic areas, the need for release time, money and other incentives for staff to attend staff development; and the need to find appropriate and qualified resource people to implement staff development needs. At least two of the three groups of specialists discussed the following ideas for providing more variety and flexibility in the structures and approaches to delivering staff development: offering staff development through some type of a regional plan, offering some type of specialized staff develoment for new instructors, using interactive teaching strategies, providing for both homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping of staff in staff development sessions as well as delivering through both group and individual means, and providing for sharing resources among instructors in the same program areas. A variety of other suggestions for diverse and flexible structures and approaches to offering staff development were suggested by only one group of specialists or individual specialists in a group; the concerns that prompted their suggestions may have been unique to their area or program.

All three groups expressed the need for staff development to be offered through a variety of sources including specialists themselves, teacher training institutions, business and industry, and trade and profession organizations. Along with these suggestions, specialists in all three groups indicated the desire to have control of at least some of the funds for staff development to distribute through a variety of means they believed would better meet the staff development needs of their personnel. Indicating the need to "loosen" funding procedures for staff development was prevalant throughout all of the groups.

Although some specialists in all of the groups indicated positive experiences and satisfaction working with the teacher training institutions, all three groups made a number of suggestions for change in the procedures and offerings delivered through these institutions. The fact that most of these offerings are for credit and included tuition costs was indicated as a problem for

staff by the post-secondary and secondary education specialists, especially for mature staff who no longer need credits for career advancement. However, specialists in the student support area and a few in the other two groups indicated that some staff do want credits to use for both degree programs and licensure. Specialists in two of the groups pointed out the need for teacher training institutions to examine their mission as it related to staff development needs. Other suggestions related to teacher training institutions common to at least two of the three groups of specialists included: the need for up-to-date instructors and programs, improvement in or deletion of specific courses required for licensure, research applicable to program areas, courses which offer less theory and more ideas that can be applied immediately, expanding delivery methods, and a course or other guidance in promoting the development and use of student organizations. Along with the desire previously indicated for loosening procedures for funding for staff development, loosening of procedures for working with teacher training institutions and in the offerings they make available was commonly stressed among the specialists.

THEME #2: SUPPORT FOR PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The student support area specialists placed particular emphasis on the need to support staff in their personal and professional development; therefore, this is included as a separate theme for good staff development. Similar ideas were included under the first theme in the other two groups (i.e., the theme related to the need for flexibility and variety in approaches and structures for delivering staff development) although they were not as numerous or definite for the other groups. The student support specialists' ideas for personal and professional develoment of staff focused on the needs of mature staff, those staff dealing regularly with the problems of others, and staff needs for career development.

THEME #3: IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The need to include planning and needs assessment involving local and state staff and a variety of other relevant groups was described as an important part of staff development by all three groups of specialists and emerged as a major theme for all three groups. The post-secondary education group of specialists also indicated the need for evaluation as part of this process. Emphasis on gaining input from local staff and on beginning planning and needs assessment by listening to local recipients of staff development, joint planning with a variety of groups, viewing planning and needs assessment as an ongoing process, and long range planning were included in this idea common to all groups. The need to review the licensure renewal process was included in the discussion related to this theme.

THEME #4: NETWORKING WITH OTHER GROUPS

The post-secondary education groups of specialists placed extensive emphasis on the importance of networking with business, industry, and other sources of expertise in the private sector as an important part of good staff development; although discussed as important in needs assessment and delivery of staff development by the secondary education specialists, it did not emerge as a major theme for that group or the student support areas group. As well as offering suggestions for working with business, industry, and other groups in needs assessment for staff development, the post-secondary education group also discussed ideas for networking with these groups in providing training to groups and individuals both on-site in industry and at AVTIs.

THEME #5: HUMAN AND MONETARY RESOURCES

The importance of having quality resource people for conducting staff development activities was stressed by all three groups of specialists and was a major theme for all three groups. Frequent suggestions for improving staff development related to this theme included the recognition and use of local teachers as resources, the use of peer teaching and sharing, the use of leaders who are up-to-date and experts in their fields, and the need to match resource people to the staff development needs of staff.

The need to increase and more equitably distribute monetary resources for staff development emerged as a part of the theme related to resources from the interviews with the post-secondary and secondary education groups of specialists. Both of these groups of specialists suggested funneling at least a portion of staff development funds through the specialists who would then distribute the funds based on priorities set by some type of advisory committee.

THEME #6: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The post-secondary and secondary education groups of specialists indicated that good staff development should include a variety of activities related to curriculum development and revision and related information on specific content and teaching methods. The student support specialists also suggested the need for staff development in particular content and skill building areas; all three groups indicated this need in areas which were both unique to some program areas as well as appropriate across all program areas, either within their group or across all of the three vocational education groups. Both the secondary and post-secondary education specialists suggested allotting time to instructors for curriculum development and revision, the results of which could be shared with other instructors in the program area. Staff development suggestions by the secondary and post-secondary education groups under the general theme involving curriculum issues also included ideas for training instructors in teaching methods and methods for new delivery of program content.

In addition to the specific themes about good staff development that emerged from the interviews with the specialists in the three units within vocational education, three overall themes or issues related to comprehensive staff development covering all of vocational education also emerged. These included:

1. The importance of establishing goals for the direction of vocational education and for the staff development needed to reach these goals.

   One specialist suggested the need to take a "beacon approach" to staff development, listening not only to what local staff think they need but also setting a state direction in which teacher training institutions may play a role. Another specialist suggested having the Director of the State Board of Vocational Technical Education set up a team of staff developers to serve as an umbrella committee for the entire state for the purpose of outlining major goals and objectives for a comprehensive staff development plan. This group would also set priorities and set criteria for RFPs. Individual specialists would work with their own teams to establish and prioritize staff development needs in their own areas based on the overall goals of the larger committee. It was pointed out by this specialist that the system just does not work when specialists are not really allowed to work with their program area staff development needs. Whatever direction a comprehensive plan for staff development would take needs to be based on a thoughtfully-designed and implemented goal setting process; it was stressed that such a plan should be simple and flexible enough to be feasible.

2. The need for better communications and a greater group effort among all specialists related to staff development and staff development needs.

   Such a group effort was stressed in relation to identifying objectives and strategies and in relation to internal staff development among specialists. Rather than each specialist learning separately about new ideas and information related to topics of concern across specialists, it was suggested that specialists might learn together about new trends, terms, and concepts relevant to all specialists; about personnel development, developing working relationships among fellow employees, etc. It was pointed out that some specialists presently do not know how they relate to the staff development unit and would really embrace support in getting staff development organized. Another specialist indicated that because the mission of post-secondary education was very different from secondary education (i.e., post-secondary education programs are job specific and secondary education programs are more job general), some staff development could be done together and some had to be done separately.

3. The need to look at licensure and relicensure as they relate to staff development.

Views related to this issue ranged from the need to avoid letting the licensure/relicensure process guide staff development to the need to look at areas of need in relicensure as to what to offer.

It appeared to be general consensus among specialists that good staff development was important and that developing an organized process for "taking care" of instructors and other staff, coupled with the resources to support the process, in order to improve teacher effectiveness was of highest priority. Many specialists indicated they needed support in the area of staff development because they could not meet all of their staff development needs alone as individual specialists.

Recommendations

1. Develop an ongoing process for developing, monitoring, and updating a comprehensive state plan for staff development which includes a state-level advisory committee or task force composed of state and local staff representatives, as well as representatives from teacher training institutions and other relevant outside groups.

Such a committee would formulate overall goals which would serve as guidelines for individual specialists and their advisory committees or task forces (which specialists would establish in setting goals and priorities for staff development in each program area). Where possible, specialists in the same content areas within or across secondary and post-secondary education might consider developing this planning process for staff development together. A comprehensive staff development planning process would include a plan for evaluation of the process and the outcome of staff development activities implemented based on this planning process. Periodically the process itself would also be evaluated. It is believed this approach would allow for optimal communication among the groups and individuals involved.

2. Include a wide variety of flexible options in the structures and approaches to delivering the staff development planned based on identified needs.

Include opportunities for personal and professional staff development within these options which consider the needs of both new teachers and mature staff. Consider plans for regional delivery of staff development where appropriate.

3. Examine means for more effectively and creatively working with teacher training institutions as a source of staff development.

4. Where appropriate, develop and build upon means for networking with business and industry and other sources of expertise in the private sector in the planning and delivery of staff development.

5. Plan for increasing and making more effective and equitable uses of staff development funds as a way of better meeting staff development needs.

6. Identify and select the highest quality and most effective resource people for offering staff development.

7. Provide for comprehensive staff development in all aspects of curriculum development and revision and related content and teaching methods.

8. Examine licensure and relicensure requirements as they relate to staff development.